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Fall 2015

FTA 6580

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University of New Orleans

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FILM DIRECTING FTCA 6580
INSTRUCTOR: HENRY GRIFFIN
OFFICE HOURS: MON 4-6; TUE 1-3; FRI 1-3
ROOM: PAC 316
TIME: MON 6:00-8:45 PM

TEXTS:

Required:
Film Directing Fundamentals, by Nicholas Proferes

Suggested reading:
Kazan on Directing by Elia Kazan
Changing Direction: A Practical Approach to Directing Actors in Film and Theatre,
by Lenore DeKoven
Directing Actors by Judith Weston

There will be additional readings and screenings during the term.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To cover the techniques and stages of narrative filmmaking. Students will learn the history and traditions of the narrative style, and how to direct narrative film.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to direct narrative film, and to understand the power of narrative in cinema. They will be able to handle script analysis and breakdown, previsualization and preproduction, set behavior and post-production, from the director's perspective. NOTE: this class does not emphasize performance and direction, though these subjects will be addressed.

E-MAIL POLICIES

Students are expected to keep up with updates relating to the course and its projects via Moodle, and through e-mails with the professor, who can be reached at hgriffin@uno.edu.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required. One absence is allowed, no questions asked. The second and following absences will each reduce one's grade by five points, one half a letter grade.

TARDINESS

A five-minute grace period is allowed before a late student is marked tardy. The first two tardys are free. The third and following will each reduce the student's grade by five points, one half a letter grade. After one hour, a tardy student is considered absent.

ASSIGNMENTS

Students in 6580 will creatively prepare to direct a short film (that they are also producing in 5500) and perform the stages of creative preproduction, including (but not limited to):

DIRECTORS ASSIGNMENT: a short appreciation of a favorite (and least favorite) director
THROUGHLINE: the understood meaning of the piece, and its goals, with an addendum on its cinematic application

SCRIPT ANALYSIS: the nature of the script (Genre, Structure, Placement of Character and Given circumstances)

SCRIPT BREAKDOWN: the script, analyzed for performance beats and dramatic blocks

PROSE STORYBOARDS: A summation of script events in clear sentences, as a method of previsualizing

SET DIAGRAMS: Overhead visualizations of the sets in the script.

FILM ANALYSIS (OTHER): an analysis of film style (as in Proferes) of a favorite film (approved by instructor).

FILM ANALYSIS (SELF): the same analysis, but on student's own project.

PREVISUALIZATION: a combination of overhead schematics (set diagrams with coverage) and storyboards. Evidence of strong previsual planning.

VIDEOTAPED REHEARSAL, a document of student working with actors.

CRITIQUE

Cinema is a collaborative medium. It is imperative that students are comfortable with student and teacher critique, which will be informed, opinionated, and respectful. Student work will be discussed, and may be viewed, in class.

DEADLINES

Deadlines are important. Any project that is not submitted on the due date may be subject to a 50% penalty. An absence does not double as an extension for projects. Do not request extensions.

GRADES/SCALE

The student's grade breaks down as follows:

Film directors assignment: 5%

Throughline assignment: 5%

Script Analysis (including Throughline, Structure, Genre, etc.): 10%

Script Breakdown (including performance beats and Dramatic Blocks): 15%

Prose Storyboards: 5%

Set diagrams: 5%

Film analysis (other): 15%

Film Analysis (self): 15%

Previsualization: 15%

Rehearsal video: 10%

Students will attend several conferences with the instructor to discuss their progress. Failure to attend conferences in a timely fashion will affect the student's grade: 5% penalty per absence.

- A 91-100
- B 81-90
- C 71-80
- D 61-70
- F 0-60

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information.

CONDUCT

Cell phones should be turned off before class begins. **Phoneplay of any kind is prohibited**, including texting and internet use. **Laptop use is prohibited**. Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow students with respect. Any actions that distract the class from the work at hand will not be allowed. Civility and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed. Courteous behavior and responses are expected.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC 260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

CALENDAR – TOPICS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

- 8/24 First Class HW Watch Ordinary People, read DeKoven handout, Directors assignment
- 8/31 Good directors/bad directors; Throughline HW Throughline exercise, read Proferes 1-2
- 9/7 No Class (Labor Day) - Conferences
- 9/14 Script Analysis/Throughline workshop HW read Weston handout, Script analysis
- 9/21 Actors and their training/performance beats HW read Proferes 3-6
- 9/28 Style – Dramatic Blocks HW Script Breakdown
- 10/5 Blocking HW Prose Storyboards
- 10/12 Film Analysis HW Set Diagrams
- 10/19 New Orleans Film Festival HW Film Analysis (other)
- 10/26 Visual storytelling
- 11/2 Blocking/framing workshop
- 11/9 The set HW Film Analysis (self)
- 11/16 Post-production
- 11/23 Field Trip – Swelltone Labs HW Previsualization
- 11/30 Last Class

12/7 Rehearsal video due

Important Dates*

Last day to adjust schedule w/out fee 08/18/2015

Semester Classes Begin 08/19/2015

Last day to adjust schedule w/fee,
or withdraw with 100% refund 08/25/2015

Last day to apply for December commencement 09/25/2015

Final day to drop a course or resign 10/14/2015

Mid-semester examinations 10/05-10/09/2015

Final examinations 12/07-12/11/2015

Commencement 12/18/2015

**Note: check Registrar's website for Saturday and A/B sessions, and for items not listed here:
<http://www.registrar.uno.edu>*

Fall Semester Holidays

Labor Day 09/07/2015

Mid-semester break 10/15-10/16/2015

Thanksgiving 11/26-11/27/2015

Withdrawal Policy – Undergraduate only

Students are responsible for initiating action to resign from the University (withdraw from all courses) or from a course on or before dates indicated in the current Important dates calendar. Students who fail to resign by the published final date for such action will be retained on the class rolls even though they may be absent for the remainder of the semester and be graded as if they were in attendance. Failure to attend classes does not constitute a resignation. Check the dates on the Registrar's website, <http://www.registrar.uno.edu>. Please consult The Bulletin for charges associated with dropping and adding courses.

Incomplete Policy – Undergraduate only

The grade of I means *incomplete* and is given for work of passing quality but which, because of circumstances beyond the student's control, is not complete. The issuance of the grade of I is at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course. For all graduate and undergraduate students, a grade of I becomes a grade of F if it is not converted before the deadline for adding courses for credit (as printed in the Important Dates Calendar) of the next regular semester including summer semester.

Repeat Policy

When a student is permitted to repeat a course for credit, the last grade earned shall be the one which determines course acceptability for degree credit. A student who has earned a C or better in a course may not repeat that course unless, (1) the catalog description indicates that the course

may be repeated for credit, or (2) the student's Dean gives prior approval for documented extenuating circumstances.

Graduate Policies

Graduate policies often vary from undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, see the Graduate Student Handbook:

<http://www.uno.edu/grad/documents/GraduateStudentHandbook2014.pdf>

Academic Dishonesty Policy

<http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/documents/academic-dishonesty-policy-rev2014.pdf>

Safety Awareness Facts and Education

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

<http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/>

UNO Counseling Services and UNO Cares

UNO offers care and support for students in any type of distress. Counseling Services assist students in addressing mental health concerns through assessment, short-term counseling, and career testing and counseling. Find out more at <http://www.uno.edu/counseling-services/>. First-year students often have unique concerns, and UNO Cares is designed to address those students succeed. Contact UNO Cares through <http://www.uno.edu/fye/uno-cares.aspx>.

Emergency Procedures

Sign up for emergency notifications via text and/or email at E2Campus Notification:

<http://www.uno.edu/ehso/emergency-communications/index.aspx>. All emergency and safety procedures are explained at the Emergency Health and Safety Office: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/>.

Diversity at UNO

As the most diverse public university in the state, UNO maintains a Diversity Affairs division to support the university's efforts towards creating an environment of healthy respect, tolerance, and appreciation for the people from all walks of life, and the expression of intellectual point of view and personal lifestyle. The Office of Diversity Affairs promotes these values through a wide range of programming and activities. <http://diversity.uno.edu/index.cfm>

Learning and Support Services

Help is within reach in the form of learning support services, including tutoring in writing and math and other supplemental instruction. Visit the Learning Resource Center in LA 334, or learn more at <http://www.uno.edu/lrc/>.

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

UNO is an equal opportunity employer. The Human Resource Management department has more information on UNO's compliance with federal and state regulations regarding EEOC in its Policies and Resources website: <http://www.uno.edu/human-resource-management/policies.aspx>